CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A multiple exchange instance, comprising:

a plurality of exchanges; and

a common instance for implementing the exchanges, the exchanges sharing a set of common components and each exchange having a respective view having respective unique components.

2. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 1 wherein the multiple exchanges are implemented within the common instance for facilitating communication between the exchanges.

3. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 1 wherein the multiple exchanges each have a respective operator, allowing the operator to perform input/output using the common components to perform the input/output for each of the multiple exchanges.

4. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 3 wherein the input/output comprises an authentication operation for each of the exchanges.

5. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 3 wherein the common input/output comprises a catalog content input operation for each of the exchanges.

6. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 3 wherein the common input/output comprises a registration operation for each of the exchanges.

7. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 1 wherein the multiple exchanges are configured to use communication protocols to communicate with processes external to the common instance.

8. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 7 wherein the communication protocol is XML (extensible markup language).

9. The multiple exchange instance of Claim 1 wherein the common instance is implemented using a database program running on one or more computer systems.

10. A method for a multiple exchange instance implemented on a server computer system, the server computer system including a processor coupled to a computer readable memory, the memory containing computer readable instructions which when executed by the processor implement a method comprising the steps of:

a) defining a common instance using a common schema;

b) slicing the common instance into a plurality of exchanges;

c) implementing a common support architecture for the exchanges;

d) implementing efficient communication between the exchanges using the common support architecture; and

e) presenting a custom view of the exchanges to respective operators of the exchanges.

11. The method of Claim 10 wherein the exchanges share a set of common components within the common support architecture and wherein the custom view has respective unique components.

12. The method of Claim 10 wherein the multiple exchanges are implemented within the common instance for facilitating communication between the exchanges.

13. The method of Claim 10 further comprising the step of:

performing input/output using the common components for each of the multiple exchanges, the input/output performed by the respective operators.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the input/output comprises an authentication operation for each of the exchanges.

15. The method of Claim 13 wherein the common input/output comprises a catalog content input operation for each of the exchanges.

16. The method of Claim 13 wherein the common input/output comprises a registration operation for each of the exchanges.

17. The method of Claim 10 wherein the exchanges are configured to use communication protocols to communicate with processes external to the common instance.

18. The method of Claim 17 wherein the communication protocol is XML (extensible markup language).

19. The method of Claim 10 wherein the common instance is implemented using a database program.